

Unleashing Hell: Army Transformation and the Future Warfight

In the movie "Gladiator" General Maximus issues his famous order to unleash hell on Rome's barbarian opponents in the misty forests of Germany. While Hollywood certainly embellishes, this scene reflects several key aspects of Roman military dominance; sound grasp of combined arms warfare, forceful leadership, disciplined organization, technological superiority and soldier virtue. Together, these characteristics made the Roman Army effective and dominant in the world in which they soldiered.

Army Transformation seeks the same holistic solution in reshaping our forces. Building superior military capability is more than finding a silver bullet technological breakthrough; it is about combining enduring strengths with promising change to create unmatched capabilities. That is why the Army concurrently pursues improvements in the current, or Legacy Force, the development of a revolutionary new capability, the Objective Force, and a bridge between them, the Stryker Brigade Combat Teams. It is the combination of forces that will give the nation a premier ground force that can thrive and win in an uncertain future.

The requirement for all three forces is simple: we must be able to fight and win against a wide variety of threats **OVER TIME**, both known and emerging, anywhere in the world. That is a tall order and one that demands a variety of ground capabilities. Amidst all the talk of adaptive threats and new menaces, one thing remains clear: there are those in the world who seek to do us harm by finding our weaknesses and exploiting them. Asymmetry is not new and its basic definition is the weak man's desire to overcome a larger opponent by any means necessary. For these reasons, our answer to asymmetry is overmatch. Overmatch is a combination of capabilities: existing, evolving, and emerging, that ensure our physical dominance over those who would do us harm.

Existing- Army Legacy forces are could just as easily be called Warfigting Force or the Undefeated Force. It is a combination of mechanized and light infantry forces that can fight and win on any battlefield. It remains a force of decision that dominates when employed. The variety of maneuver forces in the Army inventory including airborne, air assault, light, and heavy, remain relevant to a globally engaged America. They give us great flexibility in a variety of missions and stand ready to fight and win.

Evolving- While providing value added, the Legacy Force has not stood still. The Army is deep into a modernization and digitization effort with the Legacy Force that brings increased information tools into the hands of our soldiers. Such digitization will ensure its connectivity with future forces.

Additionally, the Army is fielding a series of forces called Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, who contain the best of both heavy and light forces. Ideally suited for smaller scale contingencies, the Stryker Brigades will bridge the gap between heavy and light forces while informing us on the path to the future.

Emerging- To fully account for an uncertain future, the Army is building the Objective Force. It is a revolutionary force that combines both traditional maneuver and vertical envelopment with advanced mounted forces, enabled by the latest information technology. It has the deployability of an airborne unit, the mobility of an air assault unit, and the lethality of an armored unit. Objective Force units are the culmination of all Army institutional redesign, capitalizing on advanced training and testing and harnessing technology to the toughest soldiers in the world. Objective Force units are built joint from the ground up and enable the delivery of potent ground combat power by air or sea directly into combat. The ability to rapidly deploy and redeploy creates a new capability to close the gap between deployment and employment of lethal, mobile forces.

Sum of the Total. The real power of a Transformed Army is the combination of real institutional change combined with the variety of physical capabilities the various forces bring together. The hybrid capabilities of the current and advanced Army give us tremendous overmatch against our foes.

Those who speak of the irrelevancy of the current force are fortunate enough to have never faced it in battle. Our tanks, helicopters, and dismounted infantry will devastate any enemy. We continue to add capabilities to this already impressive force. The Stryker Brigades bring an incredible mobile capability to the force that can create surprise through speed and rapid deployment. Dismounted enemy forces attempting to use rough terrain will not be able to outrun or outmaneuver the Stryker forces. In a recent Joint Experiment at Ft. Irwin, Stryker units moved through terrain that the opposing force considered impassable, thus outflanking the enemy. Combined with the Legacy Force, this gives us the capability to slug it out with an enemy armored force, outrace a stealthy foe to a position of advantage, or fight dismounted in any terrain. We retain the firepower overmatch of the past plus add speed and surprise with lethal forces.

When the Objective Force is added to the mix, our capabilities increase even more. Objective Force units support decisive maneuver, (horizontal and vertical, day and night) in all weather and terrain as a dismounted or mounted combined arms team. They are capable of destroying enemy formations at longer ranges with smaller calibers, greater precision, and more devastating target effects. Against a conventional force, the combination of Army capabilities can mass heavy forces and result in the

sudden appearance of mobile forces on his rear or flanks. Modern information technology would allow us to pound this enemy unmercifully, gain continual positions of advantage and rapidly collapse his defenses.

Against an asymmetric enemy, such as insurgents or terrorists, our advanced ISR capabilities would allow us to tap into interagency and allied intelligence and rapidly move Special Operations, light, or Objective Force units to the right place at the right time. We will be able to fight in the city, jungle or mountains, and our units will contain leaders and soldiers who are intelligent warriors. We will also retain the ability to conduct effective engagement and post conflict operations, helping to ensure lasting victory.

Army Transformation will retain the decisiveness and versatility of existing forces while adding capabilities to master an uncertain future. Enduring throughout this process is the need to provide the nation with a modern, but still dominant land force, capable of rapid and decisive action in all conflicts. The ability to deploy in austere conditions, move rapidly to a position of advantage and fight and win is chief among these. It also provides the President with a perfectly matched complement to emerging precision strike. Enemies who mass to meet our ground forces are vulnerable to strike while those who disperse or dig in are vulnerable to defeat in detail by maneuver units. Finally, Army Transformation harnesses technological advances and benefits of the information age to create a force with unmatched situational awareness. Together, these characteristics provide a long-term, dependable contribution to national security.

With the United States under attack from enemies bent on our destruction, it is critical we maintain readiness while building for the future. As in the days of Rome, only an unmatched military machine, capable of victory everywhere can keep the barbarians at the gates.